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THE TRANSFIGURED TIME OF THE CHURCH

NO TIMES ARE ORDINARY. This was Dorothy Day's reaction upon learning that the Church calendar had been revised so that the Sundays after Christmas and Pentecost would now be numbered in consecutive order and termed "Ordinary time." Liturgists explaining the post-conciliar change tried, with mixed results, to dispel the inevitable impression, that for most of the liturgical year, nothing extraordinary happens. Hence Dorothy's quip, which can be restated: All times are extraordinary.

One of the more extraordinary feasts celebrated by the Church in these summer months is the Feast of the Transfiguration. Recounting this remarkable event, the evangelist Mark tells us that "Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white . . . Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, 'This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.' Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus with them" (Mk. 9:7). This is a feast of God's glory revealed in

Christ, a feast on which the dazzling light of the resurrection leads us into the darkness of His—and our own—passion and death, all the while encouraging us with the words "listen to him."

What makes this feast, celebrated each year on August 6, even more extraordinary is that it coincides with the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Ignoring the Voice that came from the cloud, scientists and politicians decided to set fire to the atom, thereby creating another dazzling light, another cloud, another shadow to be cast over humanity these past fifty-eight years: a kind of anti-feast of the Transfiguration, a feast of disfiguration. What a strange and revealing juxtaposition of days, of times . . .

A similar juxtaposition comes three days later. August 9 marks the date on which the German Carmelite, Edith Stein was executed at Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1942. Exactly one year later, an Austrian layman, Franz Jägerstätter, was martyred in Berlin. Both were witnesses to the voice of God that speaks through conscience, but there were few such witnesses in this country as scientists and politicians prepared to unleash terror on yet another Japanese city, Nagasaki, the center of Japanese Christianity.

St. Francis Xavier established a mission in Nagasaki in 1549. For two centuries thereafter, the communities he founded endured persecution and martyrdom, a witness that was memorialized in 1917 with the construction of St. Mary's Cathedral, the largest church structure in the Orient. Yet on August 9, 1945, St. Mary's provided an excellent target and was designated as the hydrocenter, "Ground Zero," for the attack. The bombardier located the church, ordered the drop and, as Gary Kohls has put it, "what Japanese Imperialism couldn't do in 200 years of persecution, American Christians did in nine seconds." What an ironic and revealing juxtaposition of days, of times . . .

As disciples, we are called to witness both the glory of Christ transfigured and the suffering of humanity disfigured. We live according to two times, the time revealed in the calendar of the Church and the time displayed by the powers and principalities of this world. And these two times constantly intersect, impelling us to make Christian sense out of them.

Our task is somehow to enfold the death-dealing destruction of Hiroshima within the life-giving light of the transfigured Christ, to salve the horror of Nagasaki with the power and glory of the witnesses of Stein and Jägerstätter. This is why we enact the story of salvation throughout the Church year. We are estranged from God's extraordinary world of redemption and communion. It has not yet become ordinary; often we can hardly imagine it. Yet this we must do.

While history's liturgies of violence and division continue in our times, we come together again and again to be shaped by another rendering—God's rendering—of time and history.

This is why the Church retells each year stories like the Transfiguration: not in sentimental tribute to the past, but to reshape the present through the eternal time, the eternal way, of Jesus. The same revelation to Peter, James and John is available to us here and now. And so we dare to climb the high mountain, to see Christ in glory and, empowered by his Spirit among us, to heed his Father's words: Listen to him.

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

We began to craft this Ordinary Time edition of *The Sign of Peace* around the story of Franz Jägerstätter. Yet very quickly we realized that the meaning of his story requires the telling of a larger narrative. In the first place, probably none of us would know of Jägerstätter were it not for Gordon Zahn, his indefatigable biographer and himself a true hero of the Catholic peace movement. And so we asked Michael Gallagher to offer a tribute to this wise elder of ours.

The larger context of the Second World War brought us to Edith Stein. When we found out that a letter she wrote to the pope concerning Nazism had been released, we asked theologian Keith Egan to offer insight into Stein's witness.

Another witness that emerged was George Zabelka, the Catholic priest who helped to preside over the dawn of the atomic age at Hiroshima. Father Charles McCarthy, who knew him, shares the story. And poet Jacqueline Dickey imagines the story as it may have unfolded on the ground that day.

Perhaps the most unexpected development in creating this edition came when we were able to put the photographs of Peter Goin, who was granted rare access to U.S. nuclear test sites, in the hands of writer Rachele Linner. Her journeys to Japan, meeting and listening to those who paid the heaviest price of those tests, gave her a unique perspective for interpretation. Another perspective, marked by a keen sense of tragedy and irony, is from Dorothy Day on the heels of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. With this provocative piece we begin.

SEPTEMBER, 1945: WE GO ON RECORD

EXCERPTS FROM THE CATHOLIC WORKER RESPONSE TO THE ATOMIC BOMB

BY DOROTHY DAY

Mr. Truman was jubilant. President Truman. True man; what a strange name, come to think of it. We refer to Jesus Christ as true God and true Man. Truman is a true man of his time in that he was jubilant. He was not a son of God, brother of Christ, brother of the Japanese, jubilating as he did. He went from table to table on the cruiser which was bringing him home from the Big Three conference, telling the great news; “jubilant” the newspapers said. *Jubilate Deo*. We have killed 318,000 Japanese.

That is, we hope we have, the *Associated Press*, on page one, column one of the *Herald Tribune*, says. The effect is hoped for, not known. It is to be hoped they are vaporized, our Japanese brothers—scattered, men, women and babies, to the four winds, over the seven seas. Perhaps we will breathe their dust into our nostrils, feel them in the fog of New York on our faces, feel them in the rain on the hills of Easton.

Jubilate Deo. President Truman was jubilant. We have created. We have created destruction. We have created a new element, called Pluto. Nature had nothing to do with it.

“A cavern below Columbia [University] was the bomb’s cradle,” born not that men might live, but that men might be killed. Brought into being in a cavern, and then tried in a desert place, in the midst of tempest and lightning, tried out, and then again on the eve of the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ, on a far off island in the eastern hemisphere, tried out again, this “new weapon which conceivably might wipe out mankind, and perhaps the planet itself.”

“Dropped on a town, one bomb would be equivalent to a severe earthquake and would utterly destroy the place. A scientific brain trust has solved the problem of how to confine and release almost unlimited energy. It is impossible yet to measure its effects.”

“We have spent two billion on the greatest scientific gamble in history and won,” said President Truman jubilantly. . .

Scientists, army officers, great universities (Notre Dame included), and captains of industry—all are given credit lines in the press for their work of preparing the bomb—and other bombs, the President assures us, are in production now. . .

Everyone says, “I wonder what the Pope thinks of it?” How everyone turns to the Vatican for judgment, even though they do not seem to listen to the voice there!

But our Lord Himself has already pronounced judgment on the atomic bomb. When James and John (John the beloved) wished to call down fire from heaven on their enemies, Jesus said:

“You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls but to save.” He said also, “What you do unto the least of these my brethren, you do unto me.”

GEORGE ZABELKA: A MAN TRANSFIGURED

BY FATHER EMMANUEL CHARLES MCCARTHY

Who was George Zabelka? Well, he was a motorcycle guy. He was someone who rode-the-rails in the 1930s with destitute men who were looking for work. He was a guitarist and an avid hunter who won several medals in the military for marksmanship. He was a paratrooper. He was a person who marched with Dr. King in Selma. He was a man who walked in the Poor People's March in 1968 and lived in Resurrection City. He was a Catholic priest for over fifty years for the Diocese of Lansing, Michigan. He was a military chaplain who in June, July and August of 1945 was the Catholic chaplain for the 509th Composite Group on Tinian Island—the Atomic Bomb crew.

Above all else, however, George Zabelka was a man and a priest who not only had the courage of his convictions but also had the courage to examine his convictions in the light of the Gospel. He was an "incarnation of conversion," a textbook case of the mystery of "truth, freedom and grace" overcoming falsehood, fear and normalized evil. He was a Christian with a desire to be faithful that ran so deep that he was willing to see the obvious in the Gospel, when the obvious demanded the renunciation of pleasant and profitable alliances.

In the early 1970s, George traveled extensively in Central and South America. After witnessing first hand the murderous deprivation the poor of this area were forced to endure at the hand of the rich, the high and the mighty, he became convinced more than ever that "violence was the only way" to stop such entrenched heinousness.

But then in 1973 he went on a retreat with other priests of his diocese that focused on the issue and the implications of Gospel nonviolence. Thus began a searing confrontation with the Nonviolent Jesus and His teaching of nonviolent love of friends and enemies. In December of 1975, he wrote his annual Christmas letter. In the last paragraph he made an announcement that must have dumbfounded those friends who, behind his back, called him "General George" and who knew that he once received a military reprimand for "excessive zeal." For in that year's Christmas Letter he announce he had reached the conclusion that Jesus taught a way of nonviolent love of friends and enemies, and that, therefore, "I

must do an about face." Years later he described this spiritual ordeal to a European journalist, "I went through a crisis of faith. I'm a practical man and those words of Jesus—"Love your enemies, do good to those that hate you . . . Turn the other cheek when someone strikes you . . .—were completely impractical. Impractical and unworkable. I couldn't understand it. In many ways I still don't. Yet Jesus took this course of suffering and nonviolence. His words were so clear, and there is the example of His life and death. For me, the issue was very simple. Either Jesus is God or not. If not, then His words could be dismissed as idealism. But if He is God, then what He said He meant. He wasn't kidding. He could not be dismissed as an idealist who didn't understand human reality. So, either I accept what He says as coming from God or else I forget about the whole business . . . Forget about Christianity."

In some ways George Zabelka is the most unlikely convert to Jesus' Way of nonviolent love since the violent Saul became the nonviolent Paul. Yet it is transparent to the eyes of faith that the life of George Zabelka is a God-designed communication and therefore is a genuinely prophetic word to the Church that an "about face" is in order. It is also a most persuasive Divine *communiqué* to the Church that an "about face" is possible and will be incalculably fruitful, if the Church and Her leadership would but trust that Jesus knows what He is talking about in this matter of homicidal violence and enmity.

In the final chapter of her book on Therese of Lisieux, Dorothy Day said of the saint: "She wrote her story, and God did the rest." So also it was with George. Contrary to all his earthly interests, he obediently proclaimed the teaching of the Nonviolent Jesus—then God gave the increase. In August 1980, *Sojourners* published an interview with him that was subsequently published in about a dozen languages, from Croatian to Chinese. With this dissemination of his message, his life moved onto a different plane. Millions of people began to listen as he pleaded to Christians and the churches to stop hiding from the Nonviolent Jesus and His Nonviolent Way.

In 1982-83, at the age of sixty-seven, he walked 7,500 miles from the Nuclear Submarine Base in Bangor, Washington to Bethlehem, Israel, teaching what Jesus taught about homicide and enmity all along the way. In England, a television documentary was made of his life, *The Reluctant Prophet*, which

Fr. McCarthy, a Melkite Catholic priest, has been active for decades in peace education. In 1992, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

CONTINUED TO NEXT PAGE

has since been shown throughout the world except in the United States. In Australia, a popular song about his courage and honesty, *My Name is George Zabelka*, is played continually on secular and religious radio stations to this day.

On August 6 and 9, 1984, he returned to Hiroshima and Nagasaki as “a Christian and a priest” to ask forgiveness from the *hibakusha*, the disfigured victims of the bombings, for his part in “bringing you death instead of the fullness of life, for bringing you misery instead of mercy.”

The video on George Zabelka, "The Reluctant Prophet" is available through The Center for Christian Nonviolence: (302) 235-2925

Just before dawn on April 11, 1992, this warrior in war who was transfigured by the grace of the Non-violent Jesus Christ into a warrior for peace, placed the final period on his manuscript for the Book of Life. However, to this very day, the ripples from that life wash over Christian hearts hardened by enmity and by a ceaseless cultural diet of violence.

What follows are parts of my interview with George Zabelka, offered in the hope that they will have a transfiguring effect on us all.

THE WORDS OF FATHER GEORGE ZABELKA

SILENCE IN THE CHURCH

I WAS “BRAIN-WASHED”! It never entered my mind to publicly protest the consequences of these massive air raids. I was told it was necessary; told openly by the military and told implicitly by my Church’s leadership. To the best of my knowledge no American cardinals or bishops were opposing these mass air raids. Silence in such matters, especially by a public body like the American bishops, is a stamp of approval. . . . I am sure there are Church documents around someplace bemoaning civilian deaths in modern war, and I am sure that those in power in the Church will drag them out to show they were giving moral leadership during World War II to their membership. Well, I was there, and I’ll tell you that the moral operational atmosphere in the Church in relation to mass bombing of enemy civilians was totally indifferent, silent and corrupt at best—at worst, it was religiously supportive of these activities by blessing those who did them, as I did.

FAILURE AS A PRIEST

TO FAIL TO SPEAK to the utter moral corruption of the mass destruction of civilians was to fail as a Christian and as a priest. Hiroshima and Nagasaki happened in and to a world and a Christian Church that had asked for it—that had prepared the moral consciousness of humanity to do and to justify the unthinkable. . . . I, like the Catholic pilot of the Nagasaki plane, was heir to a Christianity that had for 1700 years engaged in revenge, murder, torture, the pursuit of power and prerogative and violence, all in the name of our Lord. . . . One would have thought that I, as a priest, would have spoken out against the atomic bombing of nuns. (Three orders of Catholic sisters were destroyed in Nagasaki that day.) One would have thought that I would have suggested that as a minimal standard of Catholic morality, Catholics shouldn’t bomb Catholic children. I didn’t speak out.

WHAT WAR DOES

AS A CHAPLAIN I often had to enter the world of the boys who were losing their minds because of something they did in war. I remember one young man who was engaged in the bombings of the cities of Japan. He was in the hospital on Tinian Island on the verge of a complete mental collapse. He told me that he had been on a low-level bombing mission, flying right down one of the main streets of the city, when straight ahead of him appeared a little boy, in the middle of the street, looking up at the plane in childlike wonder. The man knew that in a few seconds the child would be burned to death by napalm which had already been released.

MERCY IS MY SALVATION

YES, I KNEW CIVILIANS WERE BEING DESTROYED. Yet I never preached a single sermon against killing civilians to the men who were doing it. So you see, that is why I am not going to the Day of Judgment looking for justice in this matter. Mercy is my salvation.

CORPORATE EVIL AND PERSONAL SIN

THE FACT THAT I WAS NOT ACTUALLY ON THE PLANES that dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is irrelevant to moral thinking in the 20th Century. Modern war and oppression are carried out by a long chain of individuals each doing his or her job meticulously while simultaneously refusing to look at the end results of his or her work. There is no state of corporate evil that is not the result of personal sinfulness. . . . I am as responsible as the soldier who stuck the spear in the side of Christ on Calvary. I come to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to repent and to ask forgiveness from the Japanese people, from my faith community at Nagasaki and from God.

FOUNDATIONS OF THE NUCLEAR LANDSCAPE

A PHOTO ESSAY BY PETER GOIN AND ESSAY BY RACHELLE LINNER



This is the site of the world's first nuclear explosion on 16 July 1945 at 5:29:45 A.M. Mountain War Time near White Sands, New Mexico on the Alamogordo Bombing Range in the Jornada del Muerto desert, where the dawn of the nuclear age began.

Many years ago I read a letter by the poet Ned O’Gorman, a meditation about the mystery of salvation. He told about a twelve year old boy (“a kid I trusted”) who tried to rape a ten year old girl and of the boy’s response when O’Gorman confronted him. “He had no sense of shame or sadness, just a resigned, mindless calm, as if a storm had passed through his spirit leaving no wreck, just a twisted lintel, the house intact, but the foundation, touched by the last whip of the fury, had been weakened forever.” (Ned O’Gorman, “A Letter,” *Katallagete* Fall 1975 Vol. 5, No. 4, 27)

I thought of O’Gorman’s evocative words as I viewed Peter Goin’s haunting photographs of our nuclear history. It is impossible to look at them without knowing, instinctively, that our six decades of involvement with the nuclear idol has forever weakened the foundations of our society. But to say that we have all been morally affected by the nuclear ethos is to risk diminishing the suffering of radiation’s actual victims and I do not want to do that. There is no

Rachelle Linner is author of City of Silence: Listening to Hiroshima, published by Orbis Books. She resides in East Boston.

Peter Goin is a Foundation Professor of Art in photography and video at the University of Nevada, Reno.



The residual levels of Cesium 137 (half-life of 30 years) absorbed into the coconuts on Eneu Island, Bikini Atoll, are still too high for human consumption to be safe.

equivalence between a displaced village in the Marshall Islands or an atomic veteran contaminated in Bikini and the moral damage caused by our reliance on nuclear weapons.

It is right, therefore, that there are no people in these photographs. The scarred land does not allow for a hierarchy of nuclear suffering. We cannot be moved to tears by the eloquent words of a survivor of Hiroshima or when hearing about the suffering of a dying uranium miner. We do not have to contend with political and historical arguments. We cannot argue with the abandoned and ruined lands.



Hanford and White Bluffs, Washington, were successful farming regions. This orchard was cut down after the area was condemned for use in the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

It is easy to live in the quotidian and sustain the illusion of hope for our personal future. Those of us who live in areas of the country not directly touched by the nuclear industry can become oblivious to the costs of this wreckage, and we owe a debt to Peter Goin for making visible what we do not normally see. We rightly fear radiation because of its effects on human cells, its ability to kill through time, to touch generations yet unborn. This fear is compounded by its invisibility and it is imperative we see what remains in its wake.

The photograph of the Trinity Site is historically interesting, because we want to see the places associated with the names of the nuclear age, which began in Oakridge and Los Alamos and led to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Of these, only Trinity remains in the state it was in when it became part of that litany of names. The raw experience of the other places is mediated now through museums and carefully constructed presentations that seek to engage both the mind and the heart. Trinity, though, remains as bleak and stark as when it entered human history.

Different associations come to mind in the abandoned fruit orchard near Hanford. For religious people this photograph may remind us of another fruit tree and the first time we transgressed God's plan, when we rebelled against the finitude of being human. Like many people I have been struck by the irony that Hiroshima was bombed on August 6, the Feast of the Transfiguration, that privileged event when Peter, James and John saw the divinity of Christ hidden in the human Jesus they knew. It is a text I always associate with

another transfiguration, one that the three disciples failed to witness. While they slept, exhausted by their grief and fear, Jesus wrestled with His and came to accept God's will. His obedience reversed the disobedience of Adam, and showed us what it means to accept, in faith, the uncertainty and insecurity that are an inescapable part of being human. It is the only path that will take us firmly out of the idolatry of the nuclear wilderness and into the promised land of human community.



This was Station 77. The left door was the entrance to the timing and firing distribution station; the right door led to the telephone switchboard; and the structure on the roof (Station 1511) housed camera mounts. These were constructed for Operation Redwing (1956) on Runit Island, Enewetak Atoll. Shifting sands have caused this bunker to lean toward the water.

IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY: FRANZ JÄGERSTÄTTER, MARTYR

BY THE STAFF OF THE CATHOLIC PEACE FELLOWSHIP

*Zwei Dinge bedenke, woher, wohin
Dan hat dein Leben den rechten Sinn.*

Consider two things: from where, to where
Then your life will have its true meaning.

- FRANZ JÄGERSTÄTTER

Franz Jägerstätter was born in 1907 in the small Austrian village of St. Radegund. There he was raised in poverty, a peasant dependent on the land for life. Though he was given to wildness and rebelliousness in his youth (he may have fathered a child during this early time of his life), he came to marry a prayerful and devout woman named Franziska in 1936 and with her had three daughters: Maria, Aliosia, and Rosalia. Jägerstätter soon became a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis and an active participant in the village parish, working as a church sexton whenever he was not farming the family fields.

In 1938, when the German *Anschluss*, or annexation, of Austria commenced, Jägerstätter openly opposed the German takeover and the ideology of National Socialism. Jägerstätter described National Socialism as a train “going to hell” and his conscience told him that it was impossible for one to be allegiant to the Nazi Party and a faithful Catholic at the same time. If there had been an organized military effort to defend Austria from Nazi invasion, Jägerstätter may well have fought to defend his beloved homeland. But there was no such effort. More importantly, Jägerstätter began to see that even though dealing with the Third Reich was inevitable, *cooperation* was not. Following the *Anschluss*, Jägerstätter openly denounced Adolf Hitler and even refused Nazi government cash allotments offered to each family. When a severe hailstorm destroyed most of his crops, he would not accept their emergency subsidies. From the very beginning of the war, he contended that it was being waged by “bad men”

playing a “crooked game.” Quite simply, he concluded, “I cannot play the game. The game is a lie.”

Jägerstätter was drafted in 1940 and reported for approximately six months of training. After this, he returned to St. Radegund vowing disobedience to future military conscription letters. He sought the advice of family, friends, a priest and a bishop. He was advised that, because of his state in life as a husband and father, he should not risk being executed and, therefore, he should join the military. He also was told that he should not feel guilty aiding the Nazi cause since moral responsibility for commands resided with Nazi officers and not with him or other soldiers following orders. Against almost all of the advice he received, Jägerstätter became a conscientious objector. He explained his faith, saying, “I believe God asks me to live by my conscience.” Elaborating on the nature of martyrdom, he wrote, “There are probably many Catholics who think they would be suffering and dying for the faith only if they had to suffer punishment for



refusing to renounce the Catholic Church. But I believe that everyone who is ready to suffer and die rather than offend God by even the slightest venial sin also suffers for his faith.” Finally, Jägerstätter felt that refusing to cooperate with the Nazis was the best thing he could do for his family. He would rather his children have a father martyred for following Christ than a Nazi for a father.

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On March 1, 1943, Jägerstätter presented himself to the military and stated directly and definitively that he would not fight. He offered to serve as a medical orderly as a work of mercy, but refused to advance the Nazi cause in the war. Jägerstätter was imprisoned for two months in Linz, Austria, before being transferred to Berlin-Tegel in Germany, where he stood trial on July 6, 1943, and was sentenced to death for sedition. The courts never responded to his offer to work as a medic. On August 9, 1943, Jägerstätter was taken to the Nazi's Brandenburg-Havel facility, and at four o'clock in the afternoon he was beheaded. A priest who had met with him shortly before the execution noted his calmness and readiness to die. Jägerstätter knew, as he had written, that he "could change nothing in world affairs" but that at the very least—or the very most—he might "be a sign that not everyone let themselves be carried away with the tide." The priest would later say that Franz Jägerstätter was the only sure saint he had met in his life.

The Diocese of Linz has recently concluded its investigation into the martyrdom of Franz Jägerstätter and has translated into Italian and forwarded to the Vatican several hundred pages of text concerning Jägerstätter's cause for canonization, including Jägerstätter's own letters and writings. A decision on the canonical status of his cause will be made in the autumn and once a decision is made a summary report will be published. Eventually, the Congregation for Beatification will vote on the matter.

How is it that a man like Franz Jägerstätter arrived at the decision he did? As Gordon Zahn indicates, Jägerstätter's witness was in many ways a solitary one, not supported by those around him. However, if we examine Jägerstätter's words and actions closely we can see that even as he faced execution, Jägerstätter did not consider himself alone. Jägerstätter read and prayed over Scripture and the lives of the saints, and his conscience was shaped and



Jägerstätter on his motorcycle, the first in St. Radegund.

was a fleeting moment in comparison to the eternal city of God and that as a citizen of that city he was called to die as a prophetic witness to its power. Jägerstätter's conscience called him to die for his faith in Christ before killing in an unjust war, for as



The church in St. Radegund: the site of Jägerstätter's grave and where he served as sexton.

formed by his active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. He understood that he was and is a part of the kingdom of God and that, as a Catholic, his allegiance was to his "Eternal Homeland" and not to "the Fatherland" of the Third Reich.

Jägerstätter asks, "Why do we give so little thought to eternity?" He knew that Nazi Germany

he writes, "it is impossible for dishonesty to lead to perfection." Jägerstätter went to his death joyfully in the company of those to whom he referred in his letters—Mary, the martyrs of the Church, Paul, Augustine, Jerome, Clare, Catherine Emmerich and the entire communion of saints—for he believed "happy are those who live and die in God's love." He hoped that his blood would be united with Christ's as an act of expiation, and as an offering on behalf of the world. Jägerstätter chose death so that the people of God might see the life that Christ offers all of us in the eternal homeland of the kingdom of God.

EXCERPTS FROM THE PRISON STATEMENT OF FRANZ JÄGERSTÄTTER

THESE FEW WORDS are being set down here as they come from my mind and my heart. And if I must write them with my hands in chains, I find that much better than if my will were in chains. Neither prison nor chains nor sentence of death can rob a man of the Faith and his free will. God gives so much strength that it is possible to bear any suffering, a strength far stronger than all the might of the world. The power of God cannot be overcome. . .

I CAN EASILY SEE that anyone who refuses to acknowledge the Nazi Folk Community and also is unwilling to comply with all the demands of its leaders will thereby forfeit the rights and privileges offered by that nation. But it is not much different with God: he who does not wish to acknowledge the community of saints or who does not obey all the commandments set forth by Him and His Church and who is not ready to undergo sacrifices and to fight for His Kingdom either—such a one also loses every claim and every right under that Kingdom. . .

NOW ANYONE WHO IS ABLE TO FIGHT FOR BOTH KINGDOMS and stay in good standing in both communities (that is, the community of saints and the Nazi Folk Community) and who is able to obey every command of the Third Reich—such a man, in my opinion, would have to be a great magician. I for one cannot do so. And I definitely prefer to relinquish my rights under the Third Reich and thus make sure of deserving the rights granted under the Kingdom of God. It is certainly unfortunate that one cannot spare his family this sorrow. But the sorrows of this world are short-lived and soon pass away. And this sorrow is not at all comparable to those that Jesus was not able to spare His dear Mother in His suffering and death.

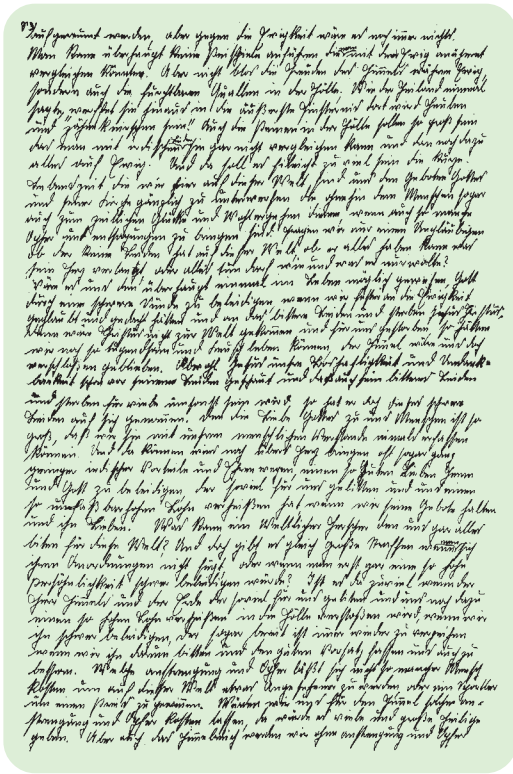
IS, THEN, THE KINGDOM OF GOD of such slight value that it is not worth some sacrifice, that we place every little thing of this world ahead of eternal treasures? . . . So

unimaginably great are these joys that God has prepared for us in His kingdom—and the greatest of all is that these joys will last forever. I believe we would almost go out of our minds with joy if someone were to tell us that we could be sure that in a few days all these joys of heaven would be ours on earth and would last for a billion years. Yet what are a billion years in comparison to eternity? Not as much as a half a second compared with an entire day. . .

THEREFORE, JUST AS THE MAN who thinks only of this world does everything possible to make life here easier and better, so must we, too, who believe in the eternal Kingdom, risk everything in order to receive a great reward there. Just as those who believe in National Socialism tell themselves that their struggle is for survival, so must we, too, convince ourselves that our struggle is for the eternal Kingdom. But with this difference: we need no rifles or pistols for our battle, but, instead, spiritual weapons—and the foremost among these is prayer. For prayer, as St. Clare says, is the shield which the flaming arrows of the Evil One cannot

pierce. . . Through prayer we constantly implore new grace from God, since without God's help and grace it would be impossible for us to preserve the Faith and be true to His commandments.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN is to be recognized more in his works and deeds than in his speech. The surest mark of all is found in deeds showing love of neighbor. To do unto one's neighbor what one would desire for himself is more than merely not doing to others what one would not want done to himself. Let us love our enemies, bless those who curse us, pray for those who persecute us. For love will conquer and will endure for all eternity. And happy are they who live and die in God's love.



Franz Jägerstätter's handwritten prison notes

LET US NOW PRAISE GORDON ZAHN

BY MICHAEL GALLAGHER

A recent *New Yorker* cartoon depicts Billy Graham's son (*Coeur de Lion* come again to slay the infidel) explaining to an immensely relieved president of the United States that "The meek shall inherit the earth" was in fact a mistranslation and Bush replying, "Golly gee, I always thought it didn't make a heck of a lot of sense."

Christianity itself, as it happens, doesn't make a heck of a lot of sense, or any sense at all for that matter, if this world is all there is, something Paul took note of when he wrote that if Christ be not risen, then we who believe in Christ are the most wretched of men.

Every once in a while, the Catholic Church, for centuries now on quite cozy terms with Caesar, giving him not only his due but a seemingly unlimited line of credit, finds herself (that Holy Spirit, what a pain in the ass!) obliged to speak up and acknowledge, however reluctantly, one of the more unreasonable demands of Jesus, who, great guy though he is, makes quite a few unreasonable demands.

Such a moment came in the course of the Second Vatican Council when the bishops took up Schema 13, "The Church in the Modern World," and found themselves confronting one of His most unreasonable: "Love your enemies." For a key aspect of Schema 13 was the question of war.

Advocates of peace (and how unfortunate that one has to single them out as such when all Christians should be advocates of peace)

mounted an intense lobbying effort in Rome (Dorothy Day among them, fasting with seventeen other women) to urge the bishops to break with the previous sixteen centuries and take an unequivocal stand against war, whose horrors had increased exponentially in the first half of the 20th century.

The sad truth was that the Church had not exactly distinguished herself in the cause of peace for quite a while, not in fact since that fateful day when Constantine replaced the pagan eagle with the cross of Christ on the standards of his legions. Since then bishops, and popes too, have, at best, temporized, looking aside in pious consternation when the specter of war arose, and, at worst, gave bellicose approbation, an especially egregious example of which occurred in 1917, when Baltimore's Cardinal Gibbons urged young Catholic men to demonstrate their patriotism by enlisting in the last and bloodiest and most manifestly unjust of the dynastic struggles that had convulsed Europe for centuries.

Whatever the gain for Christianity, Constantinianism has exacted a heavy price. For politicians, secular and ecclesiastic, have ever after done their best to diminish faith in the risen Christ to a modest creed that knows its place and never, never gets in the way—especially in the way of waging war.

Now in Rome in 1965, some sixteen centuries after Constantine, and two World Wars after Gibbons's betrayal of the gospel, ecclesiastic politicians were at work once more. Some American bishops were advocating a change in the Just War theory. In order to make it "acceptable" in the nuclear age, they wanted to drop that troublesome distinction between combatants and non-combatants, a stumbling

block to the free and untrammelled use of nuclear weapons, which, of course, was the only way to stem the tide of Communism. (Yes, Jesus *had* said something about the Gates of Hell not prevailing against his Church, but that was a long time ago.) The proposed change, furthermore, would come with a bonus: it would give retroactive sanction to the horrors perpetrated at Hamburg, Dresden, Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.

The most prominent of the gung ho faction was Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York, who a year or two later would pose for a picture in Vietnam sitting behind a machine gun, his pudgy fingers on its stock and a quote from Stephen Decatur on his lips: "My country, right or wrong."

So you can see what Dorothy Day and her friends were up against.

But then, to use an entirely inappropriate metaphor, a knight in shining armor came galloping onto the scene to champion the cause of peace. Who was he? A mild-mannered sociologist from the University of Massachusetts named Gordon Zahn.

Zahn was in England in 1965 doing research when an old friend, Richard Carbray, an advisor to the maverick Jesuit archbishop Thomas Roberts, contacted him. Not coincidentally, Zahn's current research was quite pertinent to Schema 13. He was interviewing former World War II Royal Air Force chaplains about their pastoral approach, which, it turned out, had been to assure Catholic airmen that, no matter where they dropped their bombs, God was on their side, taking care, however, to admonish them to keep their flies buttoned in town except when they had to relieve themselves and that in one

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*Michael Gallagher is the author of *Laws of Heaven: Catholic Activists Today*, and translator of *The Sea and Poison* by Shusaku Endo. He lives and works outside of Cleveland, Ohio.*

way only. (His findings would be published in 1966 as *The Military Chaplaincy*.)

In 1963, moreover, Zahn, then a professor at Loyola Chicago, had published *German Catholics and Hitler's Wars*, a *cause célèbre* in Catholic circles, so much so that it led to his departure from Loyola. Coming out at time when many of the German bishops prominent in the Hitler era were departing to their eternal reward to the accompaniment of glowing temporal encomia, invariably depicting them as ardent foes of Hitler, Zahn's book came as a rude shock, delivering as it did a thorough-going indictment of the German hierarchy. "In World War II," Zahn wrote, "the leading spokesmen of the Catholic Church in Germany did become channels of Nazi control over their followers, whether by their general exhortations to loyal obedience to legitimate authority, or by their even more direct efforts to rally those followers to the defense of *Volk*, *Vaterland*, and *Heimat* [native place] as a Christian duty."¹ The indictment was all the more devastating for its quietly reasonable tone and the wealth of evidence—the bishops' own wartime statements—that Zahn adduced in support.

Then in 1964 Zahn had published a fitting companion piece, *In Solitary Witness*, the story of Franz Jägerstätter, an Austrian peasant, the father of three young daughters, who was beheaded by the Nazis for refusing to participate in Hitler's wars. Zahn had learned about Jägerstätter while researching *German Catholics and Hitler's Wars*, but no one had written much about him.

Because of Jägerstätter's example, it was difficult to argue that no ordinary person (much more so, no ordinary) could make a correct moral

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judgment on the morality of Hitler's wars. Jägerstätter, a quite ordinary person did make the correct judgment, and, as the scholastics would put it, *contra factum non stat elatio*.

Archbishop Roberts invited Zahn to a conference being held at Oxford between Council sessions at which Roberts himself and Abbot Cuthbert Butler, an English Benedictine, were to speak. Butler was the chairman of the committee of 150 bishops who dealt with the peace and war aspect of Schema 13, and the Oxford conference marked the beginning of a correspondence between Butler and Zahn in which Zahn detailed his reservations about the draft in its current form.

The draft, he told Butler, was clear enough in forbidding a citizen

to participate in an unjust war, but this was gutted by an insistence that the presumption had to be in favor of the war's being just, which was, in effect, to sanction the way the Church had always behaved even when the war in question was waged by a government as godless as Hitler's.

Later in 1965, Zahn spent an eventful week in Rome. He gave a talk on Jägerstätter, he addressed the English hierarchy on the topic of war, and he wrote a speech for Butler, which, translated into Latin by Carbray, the abbot delivered to the Council.

"Gordon's talk [to the English bishops] turned some of them around completely," said Eileen Egan, a friend of Dorothy Day and one of the women fasting with her. "A woman journalist I knew came away with tears in her eyes. She said that she had never expected to see such a day."

Whatever the effect of Zahn's eloquence, and not to discount the variety of ways open to the Holy Spirit, the undeniable fact is that Schema 13 gave a ringing endorsement to conscientious objection and, far from dropping the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, declared any attack upon population centers with weapons of mass destruction a "crime against God and man himself" which "merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation." (*Gaudium et spes*, n. 80).

So there we had it. Though all this was merely a clarification of the Just War theory and stopped short of condemning modern war altogether or the possession of nuclear weapons *in se*, its powerful rheto-

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ric went far beyond anything the Church had brought to bear on war up to then. Nor could it be dismissed as the excessive zeal of pacifists like Dorothy Day and the Berrigans. This was the straight stuff, an expression of Catholic orthodoxy approved by the bishops of the world meeting in a solemn Church council.²

The respectful attention accorded Gordon Zahn by an English hierarchy well aware of the moral complexity involved (unlike Cardinal Spellman, not a few of them had had bombs dropped on them) has a certain irony to it, one that evokes Jesus' rueful observation that a prophet is not without honor except in his own country among his own people. For Gordon Zahn has never succeeded in getting the attention of his episcopal countrymen and hasn't to this day, at the end of his life, received the recognition that he deserves. Nor has the Catholic press given him the praise due him, as churchy in its own way as the bishops it makes bold to take to task from time to time. For both groups, and for almost all American theologians as well, the issue of women's ordination, to take but one example, is much more a hot-button item than war, even if the latter's horrific consequences could overwhelm us any day now and put an end to our nice seminars and symposiums and our trays of fresh Danish.

Zahn himself, I'm afraid, has to share the blame for being so solitary a witness. He's not a "liberal" Catholic, you see, and he's not a "conservative" Catholic. He's just a Catholic, with no ready-made cheering section, and it was as "just a Catho-

lic" that he's been capable of annoying people on the left as well as on the right, not hesitating, for example, to take the revered Catholic Worker movement to task for what he saw as a sometimes ambivalent attitude towards abortion (lest its feminists take offense). And though he admires the legacy of the Berrigans, he has serious reservations about the effectiveness of their form of non-violent resistance. For Zahn, the key has always been education, and in the years after the Council he worked tirelessly to promote conscientious objection as a choice and

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to make Franz Jägerstätter's witness more widely known, especially among young Catholics.

It was as "just a Catholic" that Zahn, born in 1918 in Milwaukee (like the Berrigans, he had an Irish father and a German mother, although he took the name of his stepfather when his widowed mother married again), declared himself a conscientious objector when his draft number came up in 1944. He had no college education at the time, having gone to work right out

of high school, nor did he have the support of any priest or bishop. But he knew his faith, and he decided that war was incompatible with the gospel.

In the work camp to which he was assigned, he met for the first time Catholics who thought as he did, though they were dismayed at what they took to be the simplicity of his rejection of war and converted him to a more sophisticated and nuanced rejection, a conversion that really wasn't necessary and was, in any event, short lived.

He did see the value of a college education, however, and when he was finally released in 1946, he and a fellow pacifist named Richard Leonard, who became a lifelong friend decided to go to college themselves. They applied to three, two of them Franciscan, describing themselves as pacifists. The Franciscan colleges promptly rejected them, the well known sentiments of the order's founder cutting no ice, it seemed, but the third, St. John's, a Benedictine school in Collegeville, Minnesota, not only accepted them, but gave them full scholarships. (Perhaps St. John's was

motivated by the destruction of Monte Cassino by the American Air Force three years before.) Their presence at St. John's eventually caused an uproar, however. There were complaints from veterans and, more significantly, former chaplains on the faculty, so much so that the abbot suggested that they take a year off and return with their scholarships intact. When they offered to pay their own way, another uproar ensued. The faculty group who

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supported them, much like the true mother in the judgment of Solomon, gave way lest the community be torn apart. So it was that St. John's turned away a future recipient of its Pax Christi Award, though in those heady days of victory no one was thinking in terms of peace awards. Fortunately, St. Thomas, a small diocesan college in St. Paul, Minnesota, had no qualms about taking pacifist money, and Zahn and Leonard enrolled there.

Their year at St. John's brought them one great benefit, however. Their favorite professor, Eugene McCarthy, went to Washington as a senator, and he got them jobs that enabled them to pursue their graduate studies at Catholic University, Zahn working in the senator's office.

After they got their doctorates, Zahn joined the faculty of Loyola University in Chicago, and Leonard, who would marry and raise a family, began a thirty-year teaching career at LaSalle. Zahn, however, remained single and devoted himself to research.

It sounds like a quiet life, but, as indicated, it wasn't. A prominent German prelate, Cardinal Bea, later a hero of Vatican II but in this case very much a child of Vatican I, was shocked by *German Catholics and Hitler's Wars*. He asked the president of Loyola to persuade Zahn to withdraw the book, which he had spent seven years researching and writing, on the grounds that it would give aid and comfort to the enemies of the Church. When Zahn, who had tenure at Loyola, refused, Bea was able to put pressure on Zahn's publisher, the German-based Herder & Herder, to withdraw the book. Fortunately for the Church, Frank Sheed, the founder of Sheed & Ward, a man who together with his wife, Masie Ward, was the most devout of Catholics, decided that

Zahn's *j'accuse* was a book that had to be published, and Sheed & Ward did so.

After the book's critical success, the University of Massachusetts made Zahn a fine offer, a nine thousand dollar raise and a class load that left plenty of time for research. It was an offer most of us couldn't refuse, but Zahn was willing to do so if Loyola would only meet it halfway. Not surprisingly, Loyola didn't, glad to have this thorn plucked from its side. An elite student organization (of which Peter Steinfels was a member) wanted to give Zahn its Teacher-of-the-Year award, but the president of Loyola gave them to understand that they would do no such thing.

As important as his contribution to Vatican II was and as significant as his books on the German bishops and the RAF chaplains were, I think it will be for his life of Jägerstätter, *In Solitary Witness*, that Gordon Zahn will be most fondly remembered. Most fondly and perhaps most uneasily. Were it not for Zahn, the world would never have heard of Franz Jägerstätter, and Jägerstätter is a figure as disturbing as he is important.

Mother Teresa will, no doubt, be canonized long before Jägerstätter, but this, as I see it, indicates why Jägerstätter is the more significant figure. Mother Teresa, though she does challenge us as all saints must, is nevertheless a saint with whom we can be comfortable. We can't be comfortable with Jägerstätter, not even more than a half century after his death.

We can emulate Mother Teresa without threatening the powers and principalities, but if we emulate Jägerstätter, we must run the risk that he did. And someday we, as Americans, might have to consider doing so. Many American Catho-

lics, in fact, would disagree sharply with me, temporizer that I am too, and say not "someday" but *now*. My friend the Dominican Sister Ardeth Platte and her companions, Sisters Carol Gilbert and Jackie Platte, who are now awaiting sentencing in federal court in Denver for obstructing national defense and other high crimes and misdemeanors in the course of pouring their blood on a missile silo, are much too kind to be critical of fellow Catholics like me, but their example speaks for itself.

In any event, Gordon Zahn, the dean of American Catholic pacifists, has labored through the heat of the day in the service of the Catholic Church. Because of him, we, as American Catholics, are on much less easy terms with the world around us than we otherwise might have been. Whether we blame him or praise him for this is now up to us.

¹ Regarding obedience to legitimate authorities, just last March Bishop Edmund O'Brien of the Military Ordinate trotted out this same argument (furnished him, apparently, by Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, a latter-day Decaturan in the Spellman tradition) to comfort any chaplain who felt a bit queasy about ignoring the pope's condemnation of the invasion of Iraq. Of course most chaplains are made of sterner stuff.

² But, as Professor Berra observed, it ain't over until it's over. Some twenty years after Vatican II, the devout William F. Buckley, Jr. scrupled not to give over an entire issue of his *National Review* to Michael Novak, like Neuhaus, a prominent, and indefatigable, Decaturan, to allow him to argue for the morality of direct attack on civilians, provided, of course, that they were Communist civilians.

HIROSHIMA O

Isshun ni hafurishi
Issen Kyuhyaku
O world!
Record the date
August 6, 1945
-Issaku Takeuchi

There were crickets
in the corner
large ones
totems of luck that
could not save
them that day.

A mother is patting and rounding
rice flour into dumplings.
Through the window
her eyes travel down the path
with her son and daughter
They go to gather
wild mushrooms.
She sings.

Heads disappear through the sodegaki.
Her eyes follow the smell of azaleas
then rise to the tall timber bamboo
against the sky
a homeless crow
is flying in circles
flying in circles
forgetting to breathe
between caws.

She sees many things
but she does not see
it is the slant of her eyes
which will bring the fire today.

She is a widow
and with her thoughts
spinning over and over like bullets
in the cartridge of a firing gun
has studied what she would do if
terror walked into her living room.

She has hands
strong hands
and words that can label things.
She would not draw back from
what would harm her children.
But nothing can prepare her for today
Not even her imagination.

She does think of fear now.
Padding across the tatami to start tea
she returns to the open door to sit
Her fingers guide a brush
through her blue-black hair
In the clean air
it is glinting like fish scales in moonlight.
Poised on her knees

she pins it back from her face.
Like a deer in a clearing
she cocks her head to listen
She does not know why.

She does not hear
the best scientific minds
in America say:

Do it quickly
Do it without warning

I do not know their faces
she will say.
Her son will come home with
skin curdled like buttermilk
black and oozing
and above dead feet
her daughter's ankles will be like
rotted potatoes.

They will wear strange hands,
her children,
fingers thickened wide as spoons
They will have seen visions.

If only she had been asleep
when it happened maybe she
too would not have seen them
Now she cannot shut out dreams
where old ones whisper: *they*
have dumped gasoline on us
and the skin from their arms and hands
peels off to the muscle,
sloughing off, running off
like meat grease from a plate
coming off like warnings that fell from the sky
burning off eyebrows and leaving
blankets of skin floating in water
like oil spills and burns
too horrible to imagine
but she must
because it is real
they have made it real.

And now her children stand before her
noiseless like the flash
and follow her with lashless eyes.
They do not cry as children should
The fire has stolen even their tears
Their imploring gaze singly asks:
Mama
We are thirsty
We are thirsty
Give us words.

Jacqueline Dickey's book of poems, When The Believer's Chin Points Toward the Moon was published by Rose Hill Books in 1999. She resides in South Bend, Indiana.

WITH THE EYES AND THE HEART OF A PROPHET

BY KEITH J. EGAN

COME, LET US GO FOR OUR PEOPLE were the last words that were heard from Edith Stein as she and her sister, Rosa, were arrested on orders from the Nazis. This arrest was a reprisal for a pastoral letter written by the Catholic bishops of the Netherlands protesting the Nazi treatment of the Jews. The Stein sisters, after imprisonment in the Netherlands, were shipped to Auschwitz-Birkenau where they were executed in the gas chambers on August 9, 1942. Martyred as a Catholic Jew, Stein was canonized a saint by the Catholic church in 1998. In October 1999, Pope John Paul II declared Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Siena and Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) as co-patronesses of Europe.

In the papal proclamation of 1999 Pope John Paul wrote that “today we look upon Teresa Benedicta of the Cross and, in her witness as an innocent victim, we recognize an imitation of the Sacrificial Lamb and a protest against every violation of the fundamental rights of the person.” It is ironic that, as early as 1933, she wrote a letter to Pope Pius XI, alerting the pope that Catholics would soon be treated as badly as the Jews. She wanted the church to protest the barbaric treatment of the Jews and of others by the Nazis. She wrote that “we all, who are faithful children of the Church and who see the conditions in Germany with open eyes, fear the worst for the prestige of the Church, if the silence continues any longer.” (The text of letter follows this essay.) Edith Stein had known discrimination for a long time. She was a brilliant philosophy student who became Edmund Husserl’s personal assistant. Husserl, the founder of Phenomenology, was one of the most prominent philosophers of his day. Although she had all the necessary credentials “in spades,” she was denied a teaching position at German universities because she was a woman. When Adolph Hitler came to power in 1933, Edith Stein was barred from all public office including her teaching and research duties. Stein left Germany for Holland on December 31, 1938, in the aftermath of Kristallnacht, the night when Nazi thugs wreaked

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havoc on Jews all over the country. That way Sister Benedicta, as she was known by the Carmelite nuns in her community, could spare their convent in Cologne Nazi reprisals.

As a teenager Edith, the youngest child in a large Jewish family, abandoned her Jewish faith and gave up prayer. As a university student she began to find her way to an awareness of the world of the spirit. A fellow student of Stein’s was killed in World War I. The rich Catholic faith of his widow made a profound impression on Edith. Later when she read the autobiography of Teresa of Avila, she declared that she had found the truth. Edith had always been on a search for the truth. And, in line with her Phenomenological training, she became an “agent of truth” no matter what the endeavor. Edith was baptized a Catholic on January 1, 1922, Right then and there she wanted to enter a Carmelite monastery. However, her spiritual guides advised her to stay in the public arena where her gifts of scholarship would benefit many. She taught in a Catholic training college for teachers, and she became a primary voice in European Catholic feminism. Edith took on teaching and research duties at an Institute in Münster which she had to relinquish after the Nazis came to power in 1933.

The Nazi takeover in 1933 meant the end of Stein’s teaching and research. Hitler thus made it possible for her to fulfill her long held desire to become a Carmelite like Teresa of Avila. Like the still, small voice heard by Elijah (1 Kings 19:11-13), Sister Benedicta now listened to the Holy Spirit’s promptings from within a Carmelite cloister where she carried on not only a life of prayer, but she also continued her scholarship, philosophical and religious, a commitment that she considered a ministry. She had already translated Thomas Aquinas’ treatise *On Truth*. Just before she was arrested by the Nazis, she completed her study of John of the Cross called *The Science of the Cross* in which she argues that the Gospel way of the cross is exactly what John of the Cross called the Dark Night. Elijah the prophet was a model for Stein both as a Jew and as a Carmelite. Her Carmelite Order had longed looked to Elijah for prophetic inspiration. Stein’s life and her death were those of a woman with a prophet’s eyes and heart.

1933 LETTER FROM EDITH STEIN TO POPE PIUS XI

(JUST WEEKS AFTER ADOLF HITLER BECAME CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY IN 1933, EDITH STEIN WROTE A LETTER TO THE HOLY SEE. THE LETTER WAS RELEASED FROM THE VATICAN ARCHIVES ON FEBRUARY 15 OF THIS YEAR)

Holy Father!

As a child of the Jewish people who, by the grace of God, for the past eleven years has also been a child of the Catholic Church, I dare to speak to the Father of Christianity about that which oppresses millions of Germans. For weeks we have seen deeds perpetrated in Germany which mock any sense of justice and humanity, not to mention love of neighbor. For years the leaders of National Socialism have been preaching hatred of the Jews. Now that they have seized the power of government and armed their followers, among them proven criminal elements, this seed of hatred has germinated. The government has only recently admitted that excesses have occurred. To what extent, we cannot tell, because public opinion is being gagged. However, judging by what I have learned from personal relations, it is in no way a matter of singular exceptional cases. Under pressure from reactions abroad, the government has turned to "milder" methods. It has issued the watchword "no Jew shall have even one hair on his head harmed." But through boycott measures—by robbing people of their livelihood, civic honor and fatherland—it drives many to desperation; within the last week, through private reports I was informed of five cases of suicide as a consequence of these hostilities. I am convinced that this is a general condition which will claim many more victims. One may regret that these unhappy people do not have greater inner strength to bear their misfortune. But the responsibility must fall, after all, on those who brought them to this point and it also falls on those who keep silent in the face of such happenings.

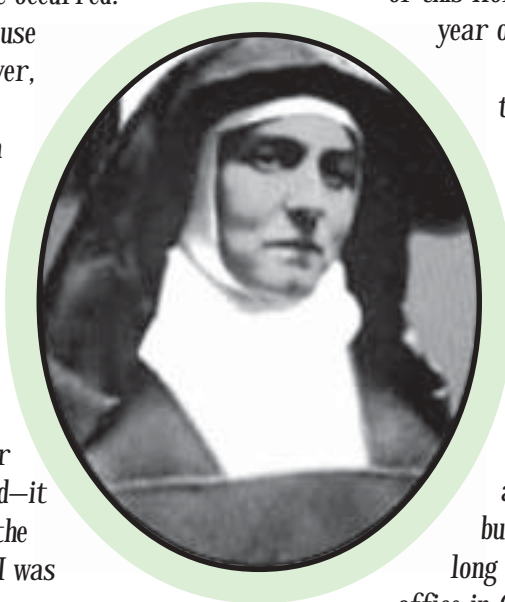
Everything that happened and continues to happen on a daily basis originates with a government that calls itself "Christian." For weeks not only Jews but

also thousands of faithful Catholics in Germany, and, I believe, all over the world, have been waiting and hoping for the Church of Christ to raise its voice to put a stop to this abuse of Christ's name. Is not this idolization of race and governmental power which is being pounded into the public consciousness by the radio open heresy? Isn't the effort to destroy Jewish blood an abuse of the holiest humanity of our Savior, of the most blessed Virgin and the apostles? Is not all this diametrically opposed to the conduct of our Lord and Savior, who, even on the cross, still prayed for his persecutors? And isn't this a black mark on the record of this Holy Year which was intended to be a year of peace and reconciliation?

We all, who are faithful children of the Church and who see the conditions in Germany with open eyes, fear the worst for the prestige of the Church, if the silence continues any longer. We are convinced that this silence will not be able in the long run to purchase peace with the present German government. For the time being, the fight against Catholicism will be conducted quietly and less brutally than against Jewry, but no less systematically. It won't take long before no Catholic will be able to hold office in Germany unless he dedicates himself unconditionally to the new course of action.

At the feet of your Holiness, requesting your apostolic blessing,

(Signed) Dr. Edith Stein,
INSTRUCTOR AT THE GERMAN INSTITUTE
FOR SCIENTIFIC PEDAGOGY,
MÜNSTER IN WESTPHALIA,
COLLEGIUM MARIANUM.



DOES A MILITARY CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR HAVE TO BE A PACIFIST?

BY BILL OFENLOCH

A common misconception about conscientious objection is that one must be a total pacifist, meaning that someone must be opposed to all use of lethal force and violence. In fact, U.S. law only requires that a conscientious objector (CO) be opposed to participation in all *war* as that is usually defined. Thus COs could support or even participate in a police force and could believe in self-defense even to the point of killing an aggressor as a last resort. As long as someone can distinguish how these actions are morally different from military combat, they should not be denied CO status under current law.

The Supreme Court explicitly stated this in its 1971 decision in *Gillette v. United States*.

The Court ruled that “willingness to use force in self-defense, in defense of home and family, or in defense against immediate acts of aggressive violence toward other persons in the community, has not been regarded as inconsistent with a claim of conscientious objection to war as such.”

Notably, the Court ruled in this finding against the claims of soldiers Gillette and Negré, who were seeking selective conscientious objection (SCO) to service in the Vietnam War. Louis Negré, a practicing Catholic, made clear that his request was based on just-war criteria and that his religious beliefs would be violated if he could not object to a *particular* war. The Court ruled 8-1 against this claim and, indeed, against the Catholic Church’s long-standing defense of SCO. The government is clearly reluctant to allow SCO because it fears many more people would refuse to support wars if each were to be debated and judged on its merits according to traditional Catholic just war doctrine.

Yet in making the point that a *personal* willingness to use force in certain cases is not inconsistent with a claim against war as such, the Court also made room for many future COs. Put simply, many people cannot embrace total pacifism in principle and yet would describe themselves as opposed to war. These individuals have often been taught to think that they cannot become COs. This is not true.

An absolute pacifist believes that only nonviolent means may be used to protect oneself or the

community. Yet there are many shades or degrees of pacifism. It isn’t so simple a black and white question for most Catholics. The Church teaches that the community must be protected, if necessary, by force. It is one thing to sacrifice one’s own life rather than kill an attacker, but the innocent must be protected from an aggressor, even if force is required. Of course, the point often ignored is that nonviolent means may prove *more effective* in defense, especially when your opponent is better armed than you.

In contrast to total pacifists, many reach a kind of “practical pacifism,” following just war teachings to a conclusion that modern warfare cannot meet these moral criteria.

For example, many people (including, it seems, recent popes) no longer consider war to be a justifiable means of resolving conflict or ensuring justice in today’s world, given the destructive power of modern weaponry and the unavailability of civilian casualties. Others believe that because of the mere possibility of nuclear weapons being used in a desperate situation, no conventional war by a nuclear-armed state can any longer be justifiable.

These views, it is critical to note again, fall within the legal guidelines for CO status. As nuanced positions, however, they may not be readily accepted by some of the draft or military review boards. This is unfortunate—and must be changed—because opposition to war on these grounds is not some loophole to avoid service. Rather, it is a position sincerely held by many faithful people today. To be sure, if a potential CO admits of the possibility of a just war—even if they sincerely believe all recent wars have been wrong—they would not be recognized as a CO. They would be faced with a choice of prison, exile or serving in the military in violation of their conscience.

One large task ahead for the Catholic Church in the United States will be to change the laws to recognize SCO and the legitimacy of those who follow traditional just-war teaching. With large numbers of COs the government would find it more difficult to wage war. A much larger task for the Church, however, will be to persuade the unconvinced Catholics of this country that war is not a moral solution to the problems facing the world of the twenty-first century. As the sole superpower it is easy for the government and its citizens to rely on uncontested military might to deal with conflicts. In response, Christian pacifists of all persuasions must speak out clearly and provide alternative visions for a future where war is obsolete.

Bill Ofenloch filed for conscientious in 1971 after college seminary. His claim was initially denied and then postponed indefinitely because of a high lottery number. He was a draft counselor with Emmaus House and the Catholic Peace Fellowship in New York City. Later, he served as program coordinator for the CPF.

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The conference will begin with Mass and dinner at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, opening session at 7:30 p.m., and will continue through Sunday, concluding with Mass and brunch. Moreau Seminary, University of Notre Dame, is the site for the conference.

Cost for adults is \$75, which includes the conference, room and all meals. Cost for students is \$30. Register now, as space at Moreau is limited. If you have questions, call CPF at (574) 631-7666.

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CORRECTION:

In our last issue we incorrectly attributed the icon of Mary, used on the cover of John Dear's book: *Mary of Nazareth, Prophet of Peace*. It is the creation of Father William Hart McNichols.



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**" WE URGE
A MIGHTY LEAGUE
OF CATHOLIC
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—Dorothy Day